

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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R 131438Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO AMEMBASSY LIMA

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6707

AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

DIA, WASHDC/DS-40C

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 5902

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, EC, PE

SUBJECT: MISSING PERSON: THE STRANGE CASE OF GEN. JOSE GRAHAM
HURTADO

REF: A) LIMA 6357

B) USDAO QUITO 052230Z AUG 75

C) USDAO LIMA 071420Z AUG 75

1. SUMMARY: WE STILL DO NOT KNOW WHETHER GEN. JOSE GRAHAM HURTADO, CHIEF OF PERUVIAN PRESIDENT VELASCO'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE, WAS ACTUALLY IN ECUADOR LAST WEEK, BUT THE AMOUNT OF PUBLICITY HIS ALLEGED MISADVENTURE IN GUAYAQUIL HAS ENGENDERED, COUPLED WITH THE LACK OF OFFICIAL ECUADOREAN COMMENTARY, MAKES THE STORY OF MORE THAN PASSING INTEREST. AS A MINIMUM, IT APPEARS THAT THE GOE DID NOT WANT TO MAKE A FUSS OVER THE MATTER, PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY DO NOT WISH TO UPSET THEIR RELATIONS WITH PERU AT A DELICATE MOMENT; PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY SIMPLY DO NOT WISH A LOT OF PUBLICITY GIVEN TO ALLEGEDLY CORRUPT MILITARY OFFICERS THROWING MONEY AROUND. END SUMMARY.

2. THE STRANGE CASE OF GEN. JOSE GRAHAM HURTADO BROKE IN ECUADOR ON AUGUST 5 WITH A "VOZ DE LOS ANDES" RADIO BROADCAST THAT GRAHAM, CHIEF OF PERUVIAN PRESIDENT VELASCO'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE, HAD MADE HIS WAY TO
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GUAYAQUIL AND SOUGHT POLITICAL ASYLUM. THIS WAS

AMPLIFIED BY "EL UNIVERSO," ECUADOR'S LARGEST AND MOST RESPECTED NEWSPAPER, WHICH REPORTED THAT GRAHAM HAD CHECKED INTO THE ATAHUALPA HOTEL UNDER AN ASSUMED NAME AND PRESENTED HIMSELF AT THE SUBDIRECCION DE MIGRACION, PASSING HIMSELF OFF AS A CAPTAIN (OF WHAT WAS NOT CLEAR) CLAIMING PERSECUTION, OPPOSING THE PERUVIAN REGIME, AND SAYING THAT HE WANTED POLITICAL ASYLUM. ACCORDING TO UNIVERSO'S STORY, THE SUBDIRECCION DE MIGRACION BUCKED THE CASE TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS IN QUITO AND ALLOWED GRAHAM 48 HOURS IN ECUADOR PENDING RESOLUTION OF THE MATTER. UNIVERSO SAID THE FOREIGN MINISTRY DENIED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE MATTER. SUBSEQUENT REPORTS HAD ECUADOREAN NATIONAL IMMIGRATION DEPUTY DIRECTOR MAJOR PLUTARCO LOPEZ BARRIONUEVO FLATLY DENYING THAT GRAHAM HAD BEEN ADMITTED INTO ECUADOR OR ASKED FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM.

3. THERE WERE THEN A VARIETY OF STORIES IN THE GUAYAQUIL PAPERS ABOUT WHETHER GRAHAM WAS OR WAS NOT IN THE COUNTRY, ACCOMPANIED BY FURTHER DENIALS FROM BOTH THE PERUVIAN EMBASSY IN QUITO AND THE PERUVIAN CONSULATE GENERAL IN GUAYAQUIL THAT GRAHAM HAD ENTERED ECUADOR.

4. IN SIDE-BY-SIDE STORIES ON AUGUST 6, PERUVIAN CONSUL GENERAL IN GUAYAQUIL AUGUSTO DIEZ-CANSECO WROTE THE EDITOR OF UNIVERSO CHARACTERIZING THE LATTER'S STORIES AS "ABSOLUTELY FALSE; DEPLORABLE THAT UNIVERSO SHOULD HAVE PUBLISHED THEM." UNIVERSO, FOR ITS PART, STUCK TO ITS GUNS AND ADDED THE FOLLOWING FURTHER DETAILS: GRAHAM ARRIVED IN GUAYAQUIL ON AN AEROPERU FLIGHT ON MONDAY, JULY 28; SHOWED PASSPORT #34039; GAVE HIS ADDRESS IN LIMA AS PARDO 1130. ON REGISTERING AT THE ATAHUALPA UNDER THE NAME GUILLERMO GRAHAM, HE WAS GIVEN ROOM 402; NEXT NIGHT HE HAD IT CHANGED TO 303; IN THE EARLY HOURS OF WEDNESDAY THE 30TH IT WAS CHANGED AGAIN TO ROOM 300. ON FRIDAY NIGHT, THE 1ST OF AUGUST, GRAHAM WAS MET BY THREE WELL-DRESSED MEN (PRESUMABLY FROM THE PERUVIAN INTELLIGENCE POLICE, ACCORDING TO UNIVERSO), AND WAS ESCORTED INTO THE STREET. A FEW MINUTES LATER HE RETURNED, ASKED FOR THE

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KEY TO HIS ROOM AND THAT HIS BILL BE PREPARED; HE THEN LEFT THE HOTEL AND BOARDED AN AIR PANAMA FLIGHT TO LIMA, STILL ESCORTED BY THE "THREE WELL-DRESSED MEN."

5. DESPITE PRESS REPORTS FROM LIMA, AND GRAHAM'S OWN DENIAL (LIMA 6357) OF HIS VISIT TO ECUADOR AND REQUEST FOR ASYLUM, SUBSEQUENT ECUADOREAN NEWSPAPER STORIES HAVE IMPLIED THAT GRAHAM ENTERED GUAYAQUIL SURREPTITIOUSLY

IN ORDER TO EVADE POSSIBLE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS, AND REPORTED HIS BEING ACCUSED OF RECEIVING MILLIONS OF SOLES IN VARIOUS SHADY DEALS. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD REPORTS FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT GRAHAM MET WITH VARIOUS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PERUVIAN POLITICAL OPPOSITION RESIDENT IN GUAYAQUIL; AND YET ANOTHER REPORT THAT HE WAS SEEN IN THE COMPANY OF CHILEAN EXILES IN LOJA HOLDING POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS.

6. COMMENT: THERE ARE, OF COURSE, REPORTS THAT THE MYSTERIOUS VISITOR WAS NOT GRAHAM, BUT RATHER, HIS BROTHER. EL UNIVERSO, HOWEVER, HAS STEADFASTLY STOOD BY ITS REPORT THAT THE VISITOR WAS GRAHAM HIMSELF, AS HAVE OTHER SOURCES WHO CLAIM TO KNOW. IF IT WAS GRAHAM, WHICH LIMA MAY MORE EASILY BE ABLE TO CLARIFY THAN WE CAN HERE, THE MOST INTERESTING THING SEEMS TO US TO BE THE LACK OF OFFICIAL GOE REACTION TO WHAT AT LEAST APPEARS FROM PRESS REPORTS TO HAVE BEEN, IN EFFECT, THE KIDNAPPING AND RETURN TO LIMA FROM ECUADOREAN TERRITORY, BY PERUVIAN SECURITY OFFICERS, OF A SENIOR PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL. ALTHOUGH THE GOE COULD NOT SYMPATHIZE WITH A FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF ITS SOVEREIGNTY, IT WOULD NO DOUBT NOT WISH TO DO ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT UPSET ITS EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GOP, A RELATIONSHIP WHICH THE GOE IS DEXTEROUSLY, IF GINGERLY, CODDLING. AND WE HAVE ALSO HEARD FROM VARIOUS CONTACTS SPECULATION THAT IF REPORTS OF GRAHAM'S CORRUPTION ARE TRUE, THE LAST THING THIS ECUADOREAN MILITARY GOVERNMENT WISHES IS TO HAVE THAT WIDELY PUBLICIZED WHEN THERE IS INCREASING DISCUSSION HERE OF CORRUPTION WITHIN THE MILITARY-RUN GOE.
BREWSTER

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